The Science Correspondent: Geographic, meteorological, and human factors affecting desertification.

Kyle: Well, people are being affected in many aspects by the desertification issue, but how exactly did it all start? We’ve got with us today our three experts on the issue. All the way from Harvard University’s science department: Dr. Rasputia LaVonne, (Emily Waves), from the M.I.T. environmental research department Ms. Bon Quiqui (Kelsie Waves), and finally from the Land Institute of Chicago: Ms. Laquanda Jones (Mia waves).

Good morning Doctor and Misses. The topic today is desertification. How do you feel about this issue?

Emily: Desertification is definitely hurting. The effects are tragic, have devastated many people and communities, and will continue to, unless it is stopped.

Kelsie: Also, the effects of it aren’t just focused towards people. Economies of countries are crumbling as many more areas are becoming affected by desertification.

Kyle: So, what exactly is causing this desertification?

Emily: There are actually several causes. Overgrazing is one of the major issues. This occurs when plant life is exposed to livestock for an extended period of time, or by placing too many livestock on too small a piece of land.

Kelsie: Originally, people would copy nature and move their cattle in accordance to it. They would move cattle in response to food and water availability too. When this system was followed, overgrazing did not occur.

Emily: Now, cattle are kept in small areas and are not moved around. Areas to graze cattle are running out and new areas are created. The plant life in the land is slowly disappearing. This is causing water scarcity and it is destroying the land.

Mia: Also, over cultivation can promote desertification. This is when a farmer plants crops too densely, or too many times a year. Bad practices also include not rotating crops each time you plant. These practices do not allow the ground to recuperate and regenerate itself. The ground can dry out too fast, and nutrients are devoured.

Kyle: Sounds like people have really been taking advantage of the land.

Kelsie: They have been, and now the consequences are now beginning to set in.

Mia: Many other things are capable of causing desertification.

Emily: She’s right. Deforestation is also beginning to take its toll on the land and on civilization. The demand for wood is rising, and there are not enough trees to support the demand. Forests are being destroyed rapidly, and there is not enough growth occurring for the forests to regenerate.

Kyle: It seems like desertification is really changing the land. What effects will this have on everything?

Mia: Well, since the ground is being deprived of nutrients, water, and material to anchor it to the ground, wind and water erosion have a much more noticeable effect on the ground. This has the potential to destroy societies that rely on the land.

Kyle: Finally, we should mention that it can be stopped. How in your opinion can we fix this issue?

Emily: In my professional opinion, I believe the best solution would be to take care of the land we have. We are the ones who brought on the problems of desertification so we need to be the ones to repair what we have done and make sure the future generations do not make the problems worse.

Kyle: WKMT would like to take this time to thank Dr. LaVonne, Ms. Quiqui, and Ms. Jones for their time. Thank you (to them). We’ll now take a look at economic issues related to desertification.